

The Long View

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Palestine and the Shifting Paradigms of Peace

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And How to Resist it

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the 21st Century

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The Rise of the Extreme
Right in the 20th and
21st Century

Professor Ilan Pappé
It is Dark Before the
Dawn, but Israeli Settler
Colonialism is at an End

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

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Cover image: Quds Day, London, 2023,
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The ongoing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza has inevitably become the focus of this issue of The Long View. As this issue goes to press, the case brought by South Africa against Israel for genocide at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has found in the interim that Israel must take certain actions in order to comply with international laws and prevent genocide. It is a bit of a muddle. Not as much as those demanding a ceasefire and end to genocide demanded, but too much for an Israeli war machine used to impunity to stomach.

This is both a shift from the usual silence of international institutions to Israeli crimes, but also more evidence that international norms and institutions are not fit for purpose. There is a sense in the interim report from the ICJ that they are conscious of the latter – aware that the majority of the world now watches their actions with a critical not a submissive eye.

Regardless of the ICJ's finding, it is clear to historians, legal specialists and indeed for those with eyes to see, that genocide has undergirded the foundation of the so-called state of Israel. Our contributors in this issue make no bones about the alliances and their ideological orientations that saw the creation of this rogue entity some 75 years ago. In these four essays are lessons for activists, academics and policy makers: stop reproducing the narratives – historical, legal, emotional – that keep the oppressed down.

In our lead essay, **Richard Haley** looks not at why there is so much tacit and explicit support for a genocidal project in the west, but how this is able to operate. He contends that three issues have been key to opening the door for this next stage of annihilation being unleashed since October 2023 on the Palestinians. There are three pillars to the procedural and discursive framework that has made this genocide possible: the imputation of anti-semitism to critics of Israel, the invention of an Israeli right to self-defence that goes beyond its rights under the UN Charter, and the criminalisation of armed Palestinian resistance. Haley takes no prisoners in detailing how international law and institutions have been disregarded and undermined, and solidarity movements cowed and or socialised. His conclusion is clear: the language of the oppressors cannot be used to liberate the oppressed.

Our second piece is from **Ramón Grosfoguel**. Likening the rising of October 7 of the Palestinians in Gaza to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, he presents the history behind this genocide, he states, in order to have a realistic politics of liberation not just for the Palestinians but all of us working for a new and better world. Grosfoguel unravels the modern narratives of justification for the creation of the 'state' of Israel. For him, Palestinians are an ancient people that embody a diversity of spiritualities and ancient cosmological traditions. They are the descendants of the ancient Jews, Christians and Muslims who lived in the Promised Land, and the synergies of these three Abra-

hamic narratives run entirely counter to the biblical justifications on which Zionists – whether Jewish, Christian, of other faiths traditions or entirely secular – base their claim to the land. He goes further in setting out how the Zionist entity represents a modern Pharaoh, with the US a 'greater' Pharaoh, behind them. If, he argues, we are to see spiritual dimension in this, and derive moral authority then the modern example of the Warsaw ghetto and the scriptural example of Moses both apply.

Sandew Hira's piece on the rise of the far-right in European settings, also argues that narratives being presented by the mainstream in the West are not only distorted but are increasingly being seen to be so. Hira sees the shift to far-right politics, including in his home of the Netherlands, as a sign of a dying politics of European exceptionalism that hasn't been able to critique and transform itself. It is distinct in his mind, from Nazism, and decolonial activists need to be able to see beyond Eurocentric left-right discourses where each label the other as extreme and themselves as progressive. Europe, in the wake of the Nazi colonial project has not turned its critical gaze, as it should have, internally, and is continuing to exceptionalise itself against the internal and external 'other'. Those of us working for a new world, need to stop repeating alliances based on the antagonisms between traditional left and right, whether 'centre' or 'far'.

Our final piece is from historian of Palestine and Israel, **Ilan Pappé**. Based on his speech at the 15th Genocide Memorial Day organised by IHRC in London, UK, he unpacks the argument he calls 'Israel's immunity shield'. This moral high ground employed continuously by the Israelis as only ever reacting or responding to Palestinian aggression is now coming apart at the seams. Israeli actions since October last have proven beyond doubt (if there were any), that Israeli project has always been a genocidal one. He also sees the end of the Israeli settler colonial project in its current actions. With the confidence of his credentials as a historian, he believes that the Palestinian movement and indeed the global movement for justice needs to begin imagining what system would replace it.

Pappé's conclusion that such a system needs to find its inspiration in the more tolerant Ottoman, Islamic, Arab and Eastern Mediterranean examples is one that chimes with this journal. We cannot keep critiquing Western systems, their innate failures and violence and then try and reimagine a world using those templates. This is not a call for the revival of 'old' structures or some sort of nostalgic indulgence. It is clear that so-called western civilisation, as various contributors have stated, is a civilisation of death. The genocide in Gaza is another bloodthirsty affirmation of this. We need to have the confidence of our convictions and shift further the already shifting paradigms of the politics of oppression. If not now, when?

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Palestine: How to Make a Genocide and How to Resist it

Richard Haley looks at the how, not the why, of the Israeli and allied states' waging of genocide. Understanding this is crucial to the formation of truly liberatory projects.

On 7 October 2023, while the Hamas incursion into Israel was still underway, Joe Biden promised "rock solid and unwavering support for Israel." But the language of his short statement was very careful. He didn't explicitly call the incursion an act of terrorism, but rather "an assault against Israel by Hamas terrorists from Gaza." This was simply a reflection of the US designation of Hamas as a "foreign terrorist organisation." There was no attempt to argue that the incursion was of itself of a terrorist character. No doubt he was mindful of the US failure to get a resolution condemning Hamas actions adopted by the [UN General Assembly in 2018](#).

Naturally Biden added the obligatory remark that "terrorism is never justified." He was suggesting, rather than insisting, that the attack was terrorist in nature. At that moment US support for Israel rested on Israel's official status as a "major non-NATO ally", rather than on the universal moralism of a "war on terror".

A day later, the position had shifted towards universalism. It had to, as other western friends and partners of Israel haven't formally designated it as an ally.

On 8 October President Macron of France, Chancellor Scholz of Germany, Prime Minister Meloni of Italy, Prime Minister Sunak of the United Kingdom, and President Biden of the United States made a joint statement saying:

"We make clear that the terrorist actions of Hamas have no justification, no legitimacy, and must be universally condemned."

A few days later Biden was [channelling Israeli atrocity stories](#) such as the false claim that Hamas had beheaded babies.

At the same time, it was becoming clear that US-British support for Israel would go far beyond empathy, and far beyond anything necessary to repel the Hamas incursion and prevent any follow-on incursions. It was to support a major ally fighting a major war.

The scale, rapidity and certainty of the response are to some degree explained by recognising that Israel is a settler-colonial project of Europe and North America, and especially of the UK and US. It should be no surprise that the ruling elites of those countries are predisposed to support their

outpost in the absence of geopolitical considerations to the contrary. But the caveat is important. The damage that aggressive support for Israel does to US relations with the global south might appear to be a contra-indicator. The fact that decision-makers in the US leapt past the problem in 24 hours or so deserves analysis. But that isn't the purpose of this article.

Instead of asking why ruling elites in the US and its allies have done this, I will ask how. How have they constructed a procedural and discursive framework that impels them to march with Israel all the way to genocide?

Three pillars of Israel's Genocide

The framework has three pillars: the imputation of anti-semitism to critics of Israel, the invention of an Israeli right to self-defence that goes beyond its rights under the UN Charter, and the criminalisation of armed Palestinian resistance.

The first pillar – the use of false anti-semitism allegations – is very familiar in the UK because of the part it has played in domestic politics. It was used to isolate former Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn and purge the Labour Party of left-wingers. The campaign was successful not just because of the strength of the Israel lobby but because it aligned with other establishment interests. Had the Israel lobby not existed, the right wing of the Labour party would have relied instead on help from the security apparatus of the British state, as it has in the past. Al Jazeera's 2022 investigation into the Labour Party crisis ([The Labour Files](#)) shows that other tactics besides allegations of anti-semitism were indeed tried in the early stages of the right-wing response to Jeremy Corbyn.

The success of the Labour purge gave an extra stimulus to campaigns against pro-Palestine campus activism and even against scholarship that challenged Israel's narrative. BDS became and remains a particular target, seen in Israel as a red line that separates liberal criticism of Israel from "extremism".

The purges and narrowing of acceptable speech in the Labour Party and academia rely on pre-existing administrative and dis-

ciplinary structures that reproduce British ruling class presumptions in favour of colonialism. The same tactics have had a much more limited effect at the base of political activism, where those structures are much weaker.

The effect of the smear campaign has also been limited by the very thing that has made it effective in the kangaroo courts of institutional disciplinary settings. It relies on the IHRA definition of anti-semitism, which is too ill-constructed to be incorporated into criminal law.

It should not be hard for Palestine activists to disassociate themselves from anti-semitic views, since such views are apt to be held by people and organisations who are supportive of racism and colonialism in general, and often supportive of Israel in particular. The effect of smear tactics on the base of the Palestine solidarity movement has been to push activists into treating this simple matter as a complex one demanding disproportionate time and energy. This is a nuisance, but it is not fatal. Activists at the political base, unlike professional politicians, are far from having been silenced or rendered politically ineffective by this nuisance.

After 7 October the UK government added its own voice to the voice of pro-Israel groups who wanted to smear demonstrations for peace and justice as anti-semitic. Home Secretary Suella Braverman described them as "hate marches."

The resilience of the Palestine solidarity movement in the face of these attacks rested partly on the depth of its civil society roots and partly on the glaring dissonance between the smears and the massive, systematic savagery of Israeli reprisals against Gaza. Huge numbers of people were simply appalled by Israel's actions.

The other two pillars of the discursive triad – Israel's supposed right to self-defence and the criminalisation of Palestinian resistance – have been much less hotly contested. They may in the end be more important.

Western leaders assert that "Israel has a right to self-defence" in relation to the events of 7 October, as they have every time that Israel has launched a reprisal attack on Gaza. This appears to be a reference to Article 51 of the UN Charter, which affirms

The three pillars of Israel's genocide

“the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations”.

A state exercising its Article 51 right to self-defence is required to report this to the UN Security Council. There are no rules on the information to be given or the wording to be used. Israel wrote to the Security Council on 7 October saying it would “act in any way necessary to protect its citizens and sovereignty from the ongoing terrorist attacks originating from the Gaza Strip.” But it did not mention Article 51.

The International Court of Justice looked into Israel's right of self-defence in an advisory opinion it gave in 2004 on the legality of the apartheid wall. Israel claimed that the construction of the wall was an act of self-defence under Article 51. The Court rejected the claim, finding that Israel is unable to rely on Article 51 in relation to an attack emanating from the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel*, published in September 2023, reiterated this point in relation to Israel's multiple assaults on Gaza.

Israel and some of its advocates in the west claim that it has not been in occupation of Gaza since its “redeployment” of 2005. Various UN bodies and international bodies insist that Israel has remained in control, and therefore in occupation, of Gaza since then. The US and UK accept this position and so might be expected to accept the ICJ opinion that Israel has no Article 51 rights in relation to Gaza.

They nevertheless persist in asserting that Israel has a right to self-defence in relation to Gaza. It's worth looking more carefully at the ICJ ruling to see what might lie behind this.

The ICJ stated that it “recognizes the existence of an inherent right of self-defence in the case of armed attack by one State against another State.”

Two Security Council resolutions passed after 9/11 in relation to Afghanistan

1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001) - are sometimes cited in support of a right to self-defence against non-state forces. The ICJ held that the situation in Palestine was different and those resolutions could not be invoked to support Israel's claim of self-defence.

Resolutions 1368 and 1373 might in any case be read as noting the potential for Article 51 to be engaged rather than stating that actions by Al-Qaeda were in themselves enough to trigger it. When, a few weeks later, the US and UK notified the Security Council that they were exercising their Article 51 right to take military action in Afghanistan, they referred to the Taliban - the *de facto* government of Afghanistan - as well as to Al-Qaeda, leaving room for ambiguity as to whether they were really claiming an Article 51 right in relation to a non-state force.

International opinion is divided on the question of whether Article 51 creates a right of self-defence against non-state forces. The US and the UK are amongst the states that say that such a right exists. Debate on the issue generally assumes that the non-state force is operating from another state. The ICJ's opinion was that whatever view is taken on this, Israel has no such right in relation to an attack from territory that Israel itself occupies. Any argument to the contrary piles a further legal innovation on top of the already contested right of self-defence in relation to non-state forces.

The ICJ noted that “Israel has the right, and indeed the duty to respond to the numerous and deadly acts of violence directed against its civilian population, in order to protect the life of its citizens.”

It would be simple - and would make a nice sound-bite - for western leaders to say “Israel has a right to protect its civilian population from terrorism.” They prefer to invoke Israel's supposed right of self-defence because that can be made to cover a wider kind of warfare and because they know that Israel's real concern is the Israeli state itself, not its people.

Challenges to the claim are barely detectable in mainstream discourse. The im-

pression given is that any challenge is a radical, politically-motivated stance and that acceptance of Israel's right to self-defence must be the starting point for any serious discussion.

Some political leaders who assert Israel's right to self-defence go on to express sympathy for Palestinians, as Scotland's First Minister Humza Yousaf has done. Their sympathy is little use once they have given their backing to a dangerous legal innovation that has helped pave the road to genocide.

Once Israel's right to wage a “defensive” war on Gaza is accepted, all that remains is to ask whether Israel's actions comply with International Humanitarian Law. This amounts to an assessment of whether Israel has caused excessive harm to civilians. A few violations of Humanitarian Law will not fatally undermine international tolerance for the war. The benchmarks are the conduct of US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan and the conduct of Israeli forces in previous assaults on Gaza.

That would be bad enough, but it has been clear since 7 October that Israel wants to go much further. Having reduced the question to one of Humanitarian Law, Israel and its advocates then tried to reduce Humanitarian Law to insignificance. They argued that a defensive war against a hateful enemy can somehow transcend all the obligations of Humanitarian Law. The apocalyptic RAF and USAAF fire-bombing of Dresden in World War 2 was cited as an example.

Self-defence is turning out to be a gateway not just to colonial domination but to mass slaughter.

The rationality of psychopaths

The third pillar of the genocide triad is the criminalisation of Hamas. The ban on Hamas in many western states has allowed the elimination of Hamas from Gaza to be accepted not only as a legitimate war aim for Israel, but as the policy of its allies.

The Geneva Conventions prohibit loss

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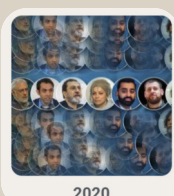
2023



2022



2021



2020

Since 2014, IHRC has organised an annual conference in the UK to discuss key issues with regard to structural and institutionalised Islamophobia. Each conference has been co-organised with Scotland Against Criminalising Communities (SACC). The project began as Decolonial International Network Foundation's activities.

Keep apprised of the latest conference details by visiting the [events page](#). The conferences usually take place on the second Saturday of December or thereabouts.



2019



2018



2017



2016

www.ihrc.org.uk/islamophobia-conference/

of civilian life that is “excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.” If the elimination of Hamas – an organisation with a mass base – is a legitimate military goal, it might be argued that high civilian losses are unavoidable and proportionate.

That is perhaps the germ of legality behind claims that Israel is complying with Humanitarian Law, and also the germ of rationality behind genocidal statements that there are no innocent civilians in Gaza. It is the rationality of psychopaths.

It is not right to say, as many people do, that Israel is using Hamas as an excuse for genocide. It is rather that the criminalisation of Hamas by Israel's allies has provided the starting point for genocide. But the politicisation of Hamas would be a crime against humanity even without the genocide surrounding it, just as the mass slaughter of the Communist Party of Indonesia in 1965/6 was a crime against humanity whether or not it is considered to be a genocide as well as a politicisation.

The international criminalisation of Hamas began in the US. The US Congress amended the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1993 to provide that members of Hamas “be considered to be engaged in a terrorist activity and ineligible to receive visas and excluded from admission into the United States.” The amendment more or less coincided with the signing of the Oslo Accords, which Hamas rejected.

In 1996 the INA was amended again to give the Secretary of State the power to put groups on a list of “foreign terrorist organisations.” Hamas was in the first tranche of organisations to be listed when the new powers came into effect in 1997. The new US legislation inaugurated the system of terrorism listings now established in many countries around the world.

The system was introduced in the UK through the Terrorism Act 2000, which gave the Home Secretary the power to proscribe foreign or domestic organisations believed to be “concerned in terrorism.” The military wing of Hamas was in the first tranche of organisations to be listed when

the new powers came into effect in March 2001. Hamas itself was not added until November 2021.

The EU introduced its own “banned list” in December 2001, in line with UN measures in response to 9/11. Hamas's military wing was listed from the outset and Hamas itself was added in September 2003. Individual EU states also have their own systems of banning organisations. For example, at the start of November 2023 Germany introduced a total ban on Hamas, going beyond the restrictions that flow from the EU ban.

The international and domestic anti-terrorism regimes introduced from the late 1990s onwards amount to a counter current to moves in the UN from the late 1950s through to the late 1970s that established the legitimacy of wars of national liberation. But they do not eliminate the established right of the Palestinian people to resist occupation by armed force.

The various bans on Hamas nevertheless have the effect of eroding that right and at the same time isolating political opposition to the Oslo process.

The UK ban allowed right-wing forces to manufacture a panic by describing the October 2023 protests against Israel's action in Gaza as “pro-Hamas marches.” This came at the same time as attempts by the Home Secretary and pro-Israel groups and individuals to label the marches as “hate marches” because of their supposed anti-semitism.

The weight of horror unleashed on Gaza by Israel has made pro-Hamas allegations as ineffective as the anti-semitism smear in limiting the growth of the movement. But the allegations have added to the pressure on police to target individuals, either for supporting Hamas or for hate crime or both.

Those arrested over supposed support for Hamas now include Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign founder member Mick Napier and Jewish anti-Zionist activist Tony Greenstein. Mick Napier was arrested at a protest in Glasgow on 16 December 2023 and released on bail. He has been

charged over a speech he made at the protest. Tony Greenstein was arrested at his home in Sussex a few days later over a single tweet. He has been released on pre-charge bail. Hanin Barghouthi, a student union women's officer, has been charged over a speech she gave at a protest in Brighton on 8 October.

The effect of these arrests has been to put the Palestine solidarity movement in the UK under pressure to adapt its discourse to fit the framework set by the British state. The pressure is hardly necessary as the movement has always been reluctant to talk about Hamas.

Self-censorship

Discussion of Hamas needs care both because of the risk of prosecution and because of the sensitivity of relations between political groups in Palestine. But self-censorship over Hamas is leading the movement to develop doctrines that are shaped by fear instead of analysis.

It has become commonplace within the movement to say that the genocide in Gaza has nothing to do with Hamas. The purpose of saying this is to disconnect protests against the genocide from negative feelings people may hold about Hamas. It is not necessary to distort history in this way just to stay within UK law.

Of course the genocide is, and is intended to be, a genocide of Palestinians. It is rooted in Israel's institutionalised hunger for a land without Palestinians. But its immediate causes have a great deal to do with the position Israel's allies have taken on Hamas.

US policy appears to be that, at the end of hostilities, Gaza should be put under the administration of the Palestinian Authority. That will only be possible if Israel can first reduce Hamas's armed and civil society strength to a level that it can contain.

If Israel can achieve that at all, it will be through apocalyptic slaughter by bombs, famine and disease. Slaughter on this scale moves the goalposts in favour of a larger



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The three pillars of Israel's genocide

win for colonialism – the mass expulsion of the surviving population of Gaza and annexation of the territory by Israel, either through sudden catastrophe or through a post-hostilities phase of dysfunctional administration by a mosaic of international agencies, and perhaps also the PA if it can stomach the job.

A war of supposed self-defence, created through legal deceit by western leaders, now stands on the brink of turning into an outright war of conquest and dispossession.

Senior figures in the Israeli government have given ample indication of their intentions. The US Administration cannot be blind to the likely consequences of its unconditional support. Occasional statements against expulsion and annexation have so far meant only that the US understands that it will need a cover story. They have the same relationship to US policy as the Balfour Declaration's reminder about "the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine" had to British policy.

The US is content to keep re-affirming its support for an eventual Palestinian state while also accepting Israeli actions that make that outcome impossible. Only a catastrophe, and consensus among other states that the "facts on the ground" have changed irrevocably, will shift that position.

South Africa's proceedings against Israel at the International Court of Justice under the Genocide Convention, initiated at the end of December, may disrupt this situation. They threaten to present the US with a diplomatic crisis it cannot resolve. The US-Israel relationship will then be tested as never before, with consequences that at the moment, in the first days of 2024, are incalculable.

Official opinion in western countries has not always been uniformly hostile to Hamas. For twenty years the UK left a diplomatic door open by only banning Hamas's military wing. Even the US showed occasional signs of moving towards engagement with Hamas. Trump's pursuit of his "deal of the century" put an end to that. The "deal" was farcical, but it led to the

2020 Abraham Accords which appeared to strengthen Israel's international position at the expense of Palestine.

It should not be a surprise that Israel was then able to persuade the UK to add Hamas to its "banned" list, possibly as a result of discussions between prime ministers Naftali Bennet and Boris Johnson during the climate conference in Glasgow in November 2021.

If secular-minded Palestinian resistance organisations operated on the same scale as Hamas they too would be banned by the UK, as they are by some of Britain's allies. But Islamophobia no doubt played a part in Boris Johnson's decision to pick Hamas from Israel's shopping list of organisations to ban. It aligned with his general strategy of seeking support within the blatantly Islamophobic hard right of British politics. He would also have realised that the reactionary character of the British Labour Party and the timidity of much of the Palestine solidarity movement would prevent any serious opposition from the left.

The ban turned out to be the final piece in the international jigsaw that set the scene for genocide.

Western governments now feel able to say there can be no permanent ceasefire if it would leave Hamas in control of Gaza. "Sustainable ceasefire" has become their term for genocide. Israel's supposed right to self-defence and Hamas's alleged criminality have been elevated to unbreakable principles while Humanitarian Law is reduced to disposable guidance.

The response of the Palestine solidarity movement has been to insist, quite rightly, that the reverse is the case. But if that is all we do, we suppress our capacity to engage either with history or with political developments in Palestine.

For Israel's allies, the destruction of Hamas has become the *sine qua non* of every road onwards. The result is that there is no road onwards. Their demand must not become embedded in the mass movement for a ceasefire. The spirit of solidarity and liberation evident on ceasefire protests

may perhaps be enough to prevent that happening. But the things left unsaid are precisely the things that created the conditions for genocide. As long as they remain unsaid, the movement will be open to manipulation by state forces and political parties hostile to Palestinian liberation, as all the main parties in the UK are.

Whatever position British courts take about speech allegedly "supportive" of Hamas, it is not and cannot be an offence to point out that Hamas represents a significant strand of Palestinian opinion and to advocate for that fact to be respected in British foreign policy. Nor can it be an offence to advocate for the ban on Hamas to be lifted, or for the wider roll-back of anti-terrorism legislation.

Even when the political wing of Hamas was legal in the UK, respectful discussions about Hamas were rare in the pro-Palestine movement and campaigns against repressive anti-terror laws were at best marginal.

Over the same time period, some sections of the movement quite rightly put a lot of effort into campaigning against the flawed and pro-Israel IHRA definition of anti-semitism. These moves have not been as widely supported in the movement as they should have been, but they have nevertheless left the movement much better placed to stand firm over allegations of anti-semitism than it is to deal with issues around Hamas's status as a banned organisation. Yet Hamas's status, along with misleading statements about Israel's right to self-defence, has been much more important than anti-semitism allegations in shaping the policies of western governments since 7 October.

Counter-terrorism discourse replaces the liberatory language of an earlier era with language that is colonialist and oppressive. The struggle for Palestinian liberation will not be won using the language of oppression.

Richard Haley

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Political Islamophobia at American Policy Institutes: **Battling the Power of Islamic Resistance**

by Hakimeh Saghaye-Biria

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Looking at the RAND corporation, the Brookings Institute and the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Saghaye-Biria overviews these three think tanks' obsession with Islam and Muslims since the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. She discusses the implications for Muslim societies of the direction of travel proposed.

Hakimeh Saghaye-Biria

is an Assistant Professor at University of Tehran, Faculty of Islamic Knowledge and Thought.

Gaza:

The Warsaw Ghetto of the 21st Century

Ramón Grosfoguel unpacks the narratives – pseudo-legal and pseudo sacred – that have been used to justify both Israel’s formation and the current genocide it is undertaking. It is time, he argues, to reclaim both narratives.

The genocidal ethnic cleansing of Palestine is made up of multiple dimensions that are often not fully understood. Due to the urgency of the situation, our priority is focused on the activism against the genocide perpetrated by the State of Israel against the Palestinian people. This is understandable and very important. However, we also need to understand the multiple dimensions that are at stake in the struggle for the liberation of Palestine and the history behind this genocide in order to have a realistic politics of liberation. We cannot rely on the perpetrators of the Palestinian genocide to stop the ethnic cleansing of the territory.

Palestinians are an ancient people that embody a diversity of spiritualities and ancient cosmological traditions. They are the descendants of the ancient Jews, Christians and Muslims who lived in the Promised Land. European Ashkenazi Jews were not the people who lived in Palestine a few thousand years ago, but the descendants of a population that converted to Judaism during an ancient period of Judaic proselitism after the Fall of the Roman Empire. The latter has been documented by Israeli historian, Shlomo Sand, in his book *The Invention of the Jewish People* (Verso, 2010). What is known in theological language as the Promised Land, the foundational space of spiritualities such as Jewish, Christian

and Muslim, is what the Torah indicates as the land that the Hebrew people once inhabited. Hebrew identity is not equivalent to Jewish identity. This is a big mistake in current interpretations of the Torah. Judaism as an identity emerged much later. These clarifications are important to demythologize the foundational narrative of the Israeli state.

Today, this land cries out once again for justice, putting all of humanity on high alert. In the past, the prophetic traditions coming from this land confronted us through sacred texts. However, in the present, the cry for justice coming from the Sacred Land confront us through the mainstream and social media. Once again, we see everyday in the media the “pharaohs” dominating and killing people. Although today modern “pharaohs” no longer enslave Hebrews, they rather murder systematically the Palestinian people. They have been living in this land for several millenniums. If thousands of years ago the victims of the Pharaohs were the Hebrew people, today Zionist Jewish settler colonial elites are the new “Pharaohs” in the Promised Land.

Israel’s ethnic cleansing began since its foundation in 1948 as has been documented by Israeli historian Ilan Pappé in his book *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oneworld Publications, 2007). After the

Second World War, this type of genocide was recognized in the international law as a response to the Nazi’s practice of ethnic cleansing in European lands, specially in the military campaigns to Eastern Europe. The settler colonialism that the State of Israel has institutionalized since 1948 consists of the illegal occupation of territories through the forced displacement of the indigenous Palestinian populations. There is a high correlation between settler colonialism and genocide. As opposed to “exploitation colonialism,” the objective of the Colonial/Racial State through settler colonialism is not to exploit Palestinian labor, but to take over their territories and assets. This means that the Zionists are not interested in keeping the Palestinians alive, since its goal is to physically expel them from the land. No colonized people give up their lands and assets to colonizers voluntarily. Thus, the settler colonial project is deeply violent.

However, this type of colonialism was not invented by the Israeli Racist/Colonial State, but has been exported throughout the planet for more than five centuries by the European colonial expansion. The conquest of al-Andalus in the Iberian Peninsula in 1492 by the Christian Castilian Monarchy represents perhaps the first case of modern settler colonialism. The same methods of colonization applied

Hybrid War on Venezuela and Iran

The Long View Conversations



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to the Jewish, Muslim and Unitarian Christian populations that lived in al-Andalus such as ethnic cleansing, encomienda, forced conversion, and epistemicide, were spread around the world through the European colonial expansion to the Americas, Africa, and Asia. This historical period that began with the conquest of al-Andalus at the end of the 15th century is known as Modernity. Contrary to many eurocentric thinkers today, Modernity is not an emancipatory project but a civilizational project of death that is constitutive of the current world imperialist system.

The responsibility for genocidal settler colonialism against the Palestinians falls, first and foremost, on the elites of the State of Israel. However, the genocidal process of settler colonialism against the Palestinians as indigenous population of the land began with the British empire. The 1917 fall of the Ottoman Caliphate during the First World War, became the opportunity for British Empire to occupy Palestine. It was British colonialism in Palestine that paved the way for the subsequent creation of the Zionist State in May 14, 1948. Since the famous 1917 "Balfour Declaration", the British empire began the official support for the Zionist project of establishing a "home" for the Jewish people in Palestinian territory. After the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate, the League of Nations officially granted the mandate over Palestine to Great Britain in 1922, thus making the entire "international community" complicit in the displacement of European Jewish populations from Europe to Palestine. The Zionist settler colonial project and the ethnic cleansing of Palestine began under the British empire way before the Nazi Project to exterminate Jewish people. Why? Because in Europe there was a deep anti-semitism that sought to remove the Jews from Europe and that reached its highest point with the Nazi genocidal anti-semitic project during the Second World War.

Behind the Palestinian genocide there are not only the British Empire and the State of Israel, but also American imperialism and the United Nations (UN) founded after the Second World War. The latter proposed in 1947, through resolution 181/II, the creation of "two States" in Palestinian territory, a plan that was accepted de facto by the Zionists and categorically rejected by the Palestinian people and the rest of the Arab countries. In 1948, was the year the Palestinians call the Nakba, the catastrophe. Close to a million Palestinians were displaced from their homes and territories through massacres. Jewish settlers, the vast majority of them coming from Europe, took over the Palestinians' land and possessions. The hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who survived the massacres ended up in refugee camps in both Palestine and the Middle East. As for the United States empire, it has been financing and arming the State of Israel since the first day of existence in 1948. Therefore, the responsibility of Western imperialist powers in the Palestinian

genocide is enormous, since they are the ones who have been promoting modern, capitalist, Western civilization by all means necessary in Palestine and the Middle East. In this context, the State of Israel is nothing more than the "mad dog" of Western imperialism that acts as the West's policeman in the Arab world. It is the protector of Western interests in a region rich in strategic resources such as gas and oil. The geopolitical importance of Israel to Western empires is crucial for their global neocolonial designs.

Sooner or later, they will be held accountable for their responsibility in the genocide they have carried out, not only since 1948 with the founding of the State of Israel, but since the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 and the Balfour Declaration of 1917. This genocidal geopolitical project has clearly identifiable perpetrators. They are the ones who have perpetrated the genocide against the Palestinian people to this day and must take responsibility first. However, all of humanity is called to assume its share of responsibility for the genocide that is occurring at this very moment in Palestine. Each of us is being judged spiritually and ethically through the mirror of the Promised Land, forcing us to take a stand. Although we are not the direct perpetrators of this genocide, our indifference to this atrocity makes us complicit. Despite the cover up and fake news, the media has exposed live and in full color the genocide in Gaza before the eyes of the world. Therefore, we are all aware of what is happening in Palestine like never before. We all know that the leaders of the State of Israel have historically dehumanized Palestinians, treating them worse than animals. The intention of genocide has been overtly declared by the Israeli elites, many Israeli citizens and repeated over and over by Netanyahu. Still, the international community keeps watching the genocide without any move to stop the massacres.

The United States insists that the State of Israel has the right to defend itself and, therefore, has been providing it with media propaganda in favor, billions of dollars in aid, and diplomatic and strategic-military support. However, the "right of defense" does not exist in international law for colonizers and genocidal criminals. It only exists for colonized peoples and victims of genocide. The violence of the Palestinian resistance is legitimated by the international law as "right of defense", while the state terrorist violence of the Israeli state is not recognized by international law. The State of Israel is a colonial military power with nuclear capabilities that does not need any help from the USA or any Western empire to impose its Will of Power on the Palestinian people and Hamas, who only have stones, and rudimentary rockets (the Qassam 3). Given this enormous inequality in material military capabilities, I am unable to characterize the conflict as a war and, instead, prefer to call it genocide and ethnic cleansing.

Today, the State of Israel has become

the new Egypt, while Benjamin Netanyahu is the new Pharaoh and Biden is the big Pharaoh. History has been reversed. The Jews in the Promised Land have ceased to be seen as victims and have become the executioners of a genocide. Now the persecuted are the Palestinians. The ideological justification of this imperial-colonial project is a literal and fetishistic reading of the Torah that betrays the spirit of the commandments, at the same time that it provides a pseudo-sacred argument to give strength and support to the Israeli military who are in the front lines to accelerate the genocidal extermination of the Palestinians.

An elite that defines itself as Jewish and pretends to be representative of all Jews in the world, is persecuting, murdering and committing abuses, torture and genocide against Palestinian children, women, men and the elderly in conditions of absolute vulnerability. Gaza is not an open air prison, but the largest concentration camp in the world today, with more than two million human beings trapped inside. In prisons, at least prisoners receive food, water, electricity, medical care and are never bombed. In concentration camps, the colonizer cuts off services and bombs indiscriminately with extreme cruelty because he seeks the extermination of the colonized.

Gaza is the Warsaw Ghetto of the 21st century. The parallels between the Nazi policies of extermination of Jews and the Zionist policies of extermination of Palestinians are enormous. Similar to the Nazis in the Warsaw Ghetto, in the Gaza concentration camp the Israeli colonizers control fundamental aspects of Palestinian life such as food, water, electricity, communication and the products that are imported and exported. As in the Warsaw Ghetto, they have destroyed the infrastructure. The Zionists bombed hospitals, schools, mosques, libraries, homes, government offices and much more with full impunity and the complicity of Western Imperialist countries. The cruelty of the State of Israel is similar to the Nazi cruelty in Second World War. They have no mercy because they seek the extermination of the Palestinian people to steal whatever portion of land remains in their hands (15 percent as opposed to 100 percent 75 years ago) and have the full support of Western empires. Although the Nazi regime lost the Second World War, Nazi ideology and institutional practices won the War. Nazi methods continued until today in the violent and criminal methods Western empires have used in the military invasions of Third World countries and in their full support of genocide in Palestine.

Therefore, the Promised Land once again places all humanity before a spiritual and ethical mirror. Which side are we on? On the side of the perpetrators of the genocide or on the side of the victims? It's time to take a stand! No one can ignore it, since there is no neutrality. Even those who consider themselves neutral are taking sides in favor of the oppressors by not struggling against the genocide.

Western states are trying to restrict pro-Palestine demonstrations. In countries like Great Britain, for example, they are trying to ban the use of the Palestinian flag to distract from the Zionist genocide and Western imperialism. In France, the state banned and repressed the demonstrations in solidarity with Palestine, while simultaneously organized official pro-Zionist demonstrations. During the 2015 terrorist acts in Paris, 25 people were killed. Western Imperialist leaders (including Netanyahu) all went to Paris and led a march against the killings. Today there are more than 11,000 Palestinians killed in less than two months and no Western leader has said anything against the Israeli massacres. On the contrary, they are all supporting the Israeli genocide against the Palestinians with international declarations and the transfer of weapons and funds.

Furthermore, an enormous amount of high-impact fake news has circulated, not only about the Palestinian people, but also about Hamas. However, it has been proven that Hamas has not beheaded any babies and that the alleged massacre of Israeli civilians described by the Israeli army and Western media is not as it has been represented. Israel has published a list of the names of those killed on October 7, and the vast majority were military personnel. According to Israeli witnesses that survived, Hamas did not attack the civilian population, but rather the Israeli army was responsible for the majority of civilian deaths. There are complaints from Israeli citizens who escaped alive on October 7 accusing the Israeli army of shooting at civilians instead of waiting for them to clear the area. With what objective? That of accusing Hamas before international public opinion and being able to justify a premeditated genocide. In other words, they have launched a media manipulation operation of fake news to fabricate public opinion on a global scale. Despite the attempt at covering up what really happened, the entire truth has been made public. Those who wish to know the truth will be able to do so, while those

who do not wish to know will keep their blindness. Humanity is divided between those who actively or indifferently support the genocide in Palestine and those who fight against it.

We find ourselves in a deeply spiritual and messianic moment: either we organize and stop this injustice, or we move unflinchingly towards the destruction of life on Planet Earth. The production, reproduction and development of life must be humanity's highest priority. We must defend life and stop those who have been destroying it for the past five centuries or else life on Earth is in danger of becoming completely extinct. This is the challenge we face. It is time to act. We repeat: either we act in favor of life or, otherwise, we contribute to its destruction. There is no middle ground or neutrality, since those who act from a supposed neutrality allow the dominators to continue with their genocidal colonial projects. If Israel consummates this genocide with impunity, the genocides in progress will be accelerated, the door to new genocides will be opened and the plan of the Davos financial elites to make a good part of humanity disappear as a "solution" to the civilizational crisis that we face will be accomplished. The Genocide against Palestinians is not just a laboratory of the American and Israeli military industrial complex to rehearse their new weapons, it is also a lab for the extermination of human beings.

But there is hope in front of us! After the USA's defeat in the Middle East wars, the Axis of Resistance is stronger than ever. Israel cannot stand a simultaneous crossfire coming from Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. From an ethical point of view, the Palestinians are not only right, but also have the full support and solidarity of the people from all over the world who oppose the abuses, arrogance and cruelty of the Zionist state. The Israeli settler colonists are weak. They cannot stand a war inside close to their homes, where they are not safe anymore. This is why we might see the end of the Zionist state in our lifetime. Moreover, the rise of China and the multipolar world

and the decline of Western Empires is rapidly shifting world geopolitics in favor of Palestine. Given that the two state solution is obsolete, what we are going to see is a one-state Free Palestine with several faiths and nations living together in peace.

In this spiritual moment in which we find ourselves as humanity, we must become ethically aware and decide on which side we position ourselves and where we wish to direct the future of humanity. Once again, the Promised Land cries out for justice and urges us to become better human beings. We must overcome individualistic modern egocentric subjectivity and become more merciful, supportive and community oriented human beings. Otherwise, we are heading to hell, that is, to the definitive destruction of life. Western capitalist modernity as a civilization of death has put humanity before a dilemma: we affirm life or we affirm the extermination of humanity. Palestine is a turning point. In Palestine, the future of humanity is at stake between the anti-imperialist's forces of liberation that the prophets always announced and the imperialist powers of the Pharaohs, Emperors and Kings. Palestine is the focal point of anti-imperialists struggles today. The unipolar world of Western imperialism is in terminal crisis and in its decline it is becoming more violent and destructive. The freedom of Palestine will be a major defeat to Western imperialist forces and will support the struggle for the affirmation of life. The Palestinian victory will take humanity to a higher level of consciousness. Let's do justice in Palestine to save humanity from the "pharaohs" of our times! From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!!!

Ramón Grosfoguel

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Europe:

The Rise of the Extreme Right in the 20th and 21st Century

Sandew Hira argues that European exceptionalism and the rise of the far-right are twin prongs from a continuing colonial current. He argues that activists need to understand the limitation of current political systems and activism in westernised settings if they are to create a better politics.

The argument

In this contribution I argue that the rise of extreme right in Europe and the USA in the 21st century is different from the rise of Nazism in the 20th century. Nazism was part of the climax of colonialism and a driving force towards war, while the extreme right nowadays is part of a declining colonialism and a driving force against war. The strategy of a united front against the extreme right is useless in the 21st century, because the coalition of liberalism and right wing forces of the military industrial complex are the driving force behind nuclear wars that could destroy the planet.

Decolonizing Nazism and the Jewish Holocaust

“What India was for England, the territories of Russia will be for us,” said Adolf Hitler.¹ Hitler did not start World War II to exterminate the Jews. He started a war to colonize Eastern Europe after the model of the British colonization of India. The first act of war was not against Western Europe, but against the East. On September 1, 1939, Hitler’s army invaded Poland as the first step in colonizing Eastern Europe.

Hitler looked up to British colonialism as a model for colonizing Eastern Europe. He said: *“It should be possible for us to control this region to the East with two hundred and fifty thousand men plus a cadre of good administrators. Let’s learn from the English, who, with two hundred and fifty thousand men in all, including fifty thousand soldiers, govern four hundred million Indians. This space in Russia must always be dominated by Germans... The Russian space is our India. Like the English, we shall rule this empire with a handful of men.”*

Hitler’s ideology was rooted in European civilization. It was not an aberration from this civilization. In the narrative of Eurocentric historians, the story of Hitler is the story of the Jewish Holocaust. And indeed, the Jewish Holocaust was an important part of the Nazi ideology and practice. But more important for Hitler was the

project of building a new empire modeled after the British Empire which he termed the *Third Reich*, the Third Empire. The first empire was founded by the German Charles the Great (742-814) who united most of Western Europe in the European Middle Ages. The second empire was led by Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898) who created a unified German state as a federation of formerly loosely bound states with a national parliament and universal suffrage for

That World War II was not primarily about annihilating the Jews, but about conquering Russia and Eastern Europe is illustrated by the following statistics. The Russians suffered the largest losses (25 million war victims out of a total of 36 million in Europe).

men. The new empire that was to have lasted for a thousand years was to be built by the Nazis using the British Empire as their model. Interestingly enough, in 1940 Churchill also expressed his belief that the British empire would last a thousand years.

Russia would play a crucial role in Hitler’s plan. The Jews were a small prize for Hitler in his war game. The big prize was Eastern Europe. Nazism was a project of colonization. It was not a peculiar form of evil. It was a regular form of evil called colonialism.

Hitler’s idea of colonizing was based on the concept of a superior race that had a natural right to colonize inferior races. The exploitation of the inferior race is necessary in order for the superior race to develop. He

writes: *“Had it not been possible for them to employ members of the inferior race which they conquered, the Aryans would never have been in a position to take the first steps on the road which led them to a later type of culture; just as, without the help of certain suitable animals which they were able to tame, they would never have come to the invention of mechanical power which has subsequently enabled them to do without these beasts.”* He regarded the Slav people from Eastern Europe like the British and ‘the rest of the civilized world’ regarded the colonized people: *“When one contemplates this primitive world, one is convinced that nothing will drag it out of its indolence unless one compels the people to work. The Slavs are a mass of born slaves, who feel the need of a master.”*

Hitler regarded himself as a true Christian who was devoted to defending Christianity. His anti-Semitism was rooted in Christianity. He lamented the division between Protestants and Catholics: *“Catholics and Protestants are fighting with one another to their hearts’ content, while the enemy of Aryan humanity and all Christendom is laughing up his sleeve.”* He refers to Jesus Christ as his inspiration in the struggle against Jews. According to Hitler the Jew *“is of this world only and his mentality is as foreign to the true spirit of Christianity as his character was foreign to the great Founder of this new creed two thousand years ago. And the Founder of Christianity made no secret indeed of His estimation of the Jewish people. When He found it necessary He drove those enemies of the human race out of the Temple of God; because then, as always, they used religion as a means of advancing their commercial interests. But at that time Christ was nailed to the Cross for his attitude towards the Jews.”*

That World War II was not primarily about annihilating the Jews, but about conquering Russia and Eastern Europe is illustrated by the following statistics. The Russians suffered the largest losses (25 million war victims out of a total of 36 million in Europe). Among the six million Jews who perished in the Jewish Holocaust, 91%

were not from Germany or Western Europe, but from Eastern Europe. Poland (51%), Ukraine (15%) and Hungary (8%) carried the highest number of victims.

The idea of the Holocaust, the systematic extermination of Jews by the Nazis, came about at the end of 1941. Before 1941, Nazi policy towards the Jews was based on forcing them to emigrate from the Third Reich and not on killing them on an industrial scale. This policy entailed the expropriation of Jewish property, the introduction of laws to ban marriages between Jews and non-Jews and occasionally the organization of violence as in the case of Kristallnacht on 9-10 November 1938 when a pogrom was executed during which windows of Jewish stores, buildings and synagogues were destroyed. *“The ‘basic decisions’ and ‘total clarity’ ... in implementing the genocide of European Jews—emerged between mid-September and late October 1941,”* writes C. Browning. The decision to start the Holocaust was made after Hitler’s army had managed to cut off Leningrad on the northern front and capture Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, in September 1941. The prospect of a final victory looked bright. The problem of what to do with the millions of Jews living in Eastern Europe – soon to be part of the Third Reich – was now on the agenda. Migration was not an option, so the idea of annihilation became a reality. Once the decision was taken, it was a matter of technicalities. The technical solution that was ultimately implemented was the gas chamber.

The horrors of the Holocaust lasted for four years. The Third Reich failed where Western colonialism has succeeded. Hitler’s project of colonizing Eastern Europe lasted for five years. The European project to colonize the world has lasted for almost five centuries and is still not over. Hitler failed in setting up an economic system that extracted wealth from Eastern Europe to enrich Nazi Germany. Western Europe succeeded in extracting massive wealth from its colonies. In their hatred for the Jews the Nazis never regarded them as cat-

tle, like the Europeans did with the Africans enslaved in Abya Yala, but as human beings, although inferior human beings. European colonialism regarded the colonized people of Abya Yala and Africa as cattle. Hitler never came up with the idea that every German could buy and sell Jews and register them in their accounts alongside cows and pigs. But that is what the European race of masters (‘Herrenvolk’) did for centuries in Abya Yala. The Nazis introduced discriminatory laws (‘The Nuremberg Laws’) prohibiting the Jews from participating in public life and intermarrying with Germans. The other Europeans introduced ‘slave codes’ in the colony that laid down in law that blacks were not human beings but cattle that was owned by the master race.

The extreme right in the 21st century

The extreme right in the 21st century is very different from Nazism. They have been operating for some decades in Europe and the USA, but only in the 21st century were they able to form or participate in governments.

In 2010 Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance led by Viktor Orbán came to power after winning the elections with 68% of the parliamentary seats. They are still in power.

In 2017 Donald Trump became president of the USA. His presidency lasted until 2021.

In 2022 Fratelli d’Italia (Brothers of Italy) won the elections and Giorgia Meloni became prime minister.

In 2023 the Party for Freedom led by Geert Wilders won national elections and is in the process of forming a government.

In many countries the far right are leading the opposition against the government. In the last presidential elections in 2020 in France Marine le Pen from the National Rally (previously National Front) won 23% van the votes in the first round (Macron got 28%) and 32% in the second round

(Macron got 58%).

In the US the extreme right form the majority of the Republican Party.

There is a variety of extreme right parties in Europe. There are often splits in the process of growth. But they are united on the following issues:

Immigration

They are not against immigration in and of itself. They are not against immigration of white people. They are against immigration of people of colour. Their propaganda against immigration focuses on the protection of European civilization, more specifically white Christian values and norms. Some parties are explicitly religious, others are more secular, but firmly rooted in Western civilization.

The decline of Western economic and political power goes hand in hand with the decline of the cultural power of Western civilization. Nazism gained influence in a period in which Western colonialism was still very much in control of the globe. The extreme right in the 21st century is rising because of the decline of Western civilization and the loss of identity that immigration has caused. Nazism has little to do with the loss of identity.

Anti globalization and anti-war

Like Nazism, the extreme right promotes nationalism. Unlike Nazism, they are against globalization. Nazism saw the colonization of Eastern Europe as the first in establishing a new world order. The Third Reich was to be a global empire, like the British empire.

The extreme right is nationalist, anti-war and anti globalization. The forces who are pushing for war and maintaining colonial rule in the world come not from the extreme right but from liberalism and social democracy. In the UK, Labour Party leader Tony Blair was one of the driving forces in

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DTM Podcast

The false political choice between left and right

the war against Iraq. The pro-war forces in the USA come from the Democratic Party with the support of many parts of the elites of the Republican Party. They are pushing for war against Russia, China, Iran and North Korea. And the irony is that the extreme right in the USA (and Europe) is pushing back and wants an end to endless wars, not because they love peace, but because they don't believe they can benefit from these wars. They have accepted the military defeat of the colonial empire and want to focus on building their economies on peaceful terms. Nazism adopted the opposite of this policy.

Donald Trump tried to make peace with Russia and North Korea. He was obstructed by liberals and the right in his own party, who were backed by the military industrial complex. And they used his racism against immigrants and his extreme right language to sabotage his peace deals. Under the pressure of the Zionist lobby and with the support of the liberals and the right in his party he was prepared to go to war with Iran.

Social policy

In terms of social policy some extreme right parties are even more progressive than the traditional left. An example is the Freedom Party of Geert Wilders in the Netherlands. The political program calls for:

- Reduction of VAT on groceries from 9% to 0
- Reducing energy bills (lower tax and VAT)
- Reducing social rents
- Increase statutory minimum wage
- Reduction of fuel taxes
- Lowering the state pension age to 65 (currently it is 67)
- 20 percent salary reduction for ministers, MPs and MEPs
- Reducing contribution to Royal House by 20%

Many left parties are not prepared to go that far in their programs.

Policy consequences

What are the policy consequences of this analysis from a decolonial point of view? The most important consequence is the refusal to unite with liberals and so-called progressives against the extreme right. We don't buy into the scare tactics of liberals who argue that we need to rally against the extreme right and support liberalism. Liberalism is all about supporting colonial wars. That should be the main concern of decolonial activists.

Rather than panic about the rise of the extreme right we should stay calm and refuse to support liberals in the name of progressive unity against the extreme right. We must remain steadfast on the policy of ending imperialist wars and imperialist power.

Rather than panic about the rise of the extreme right we should stay calm and refuse to support liberals in the name of progressive unity against the extreme right. We must remain steadfast on the policy of ending imperialist wars and imperialist power. It matters to black people and immigrants in the USA that Trump comes up with racist policies. So we should criticize those policies and mobilize to fight these policies. This is perfectly possible while at the same time criticizing and mobilizing the imperialist wars being

led by liberals in America and Europe. In Europe we should support leftist parties who are against colonial wars and criticize those 'progressive' parties who are supporting these wars. In the USA there are third party candidates, but because of the dominant role of the media in colonizing the mind, they don't have a significant influence. Because of this, the electorate in the USA is presented with only two choices: the Republican or the Democratic Party. Decolonial activists don't have to accept that choice. The liberal argument that a vote for a third party is a vote for Trump, because it is a loss of a vote for Biden, is a colonial argument. If Biden is as bad as Trump - Biden is pro war and Trump is pro racism - why should we waste a vote and not use it in a more intelligent way? A vote for anti-war and anti-racist third parties is a vote that gives the message: whoever is in power, they will never follow policies that create a better society. One way or another, they are messing up the social fabric of the USA and of the world.

The struggle for a better world goes far beyond the electoral struggle. It is a struggle that involves active mobilization against war and against racism. We don't have to abandon one struggle out of fear that the other struggle will become weaker. We can do better than to follow this kind of colonial logic.

¹ All quotes are from my book *Decolonizing The Mind*, paragraph 8.3 - The role of Nazism and the Jewish Holocaust in Western civilization. Sandew Hira: *Decolonizing The Mind. A Guide to Decolonial Theory and Practice*. Amrit Publishers. The Hague, 2023.

Sandew Hira

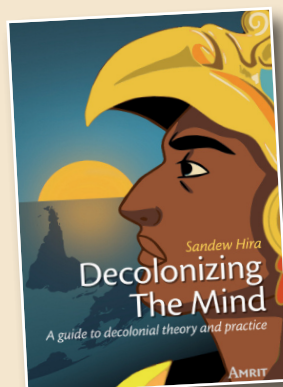
is secretary of the [DIN Foundation](#) based in The Hague in The Netherlands. He is a well known activist, author and researcher. He heads the editorial board for [Amrit Publishers](#), and is the founder of the [International Institute for Scientific Research](#). You can find many videos of his lectures on Decolonising the Mind and related topics on the [IHRC website](#) and [IHRCTV](#).

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Decolonizing Mind - a guide to decolonial theory and practice

By Sandew Hira

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In different parts of the world a new decolonial movement is growing that challenges long time narratives in knowledge production and social struggle and transforms activism and social movements. It is driven by key factors such as the fall of the west and the rise of the rest, the collapse of the socialist bloc and in general the crisis of Western civilization.

Hira develops a comprehensive, coherent and integral theoretical framework that draws on different contributions in the decolonial movement, and deals with the practical implication of decolonial theory for decolonial activism.

Victory:

It is Dark Before the Dawn, but Israeli Settler Colonialism is at an End

Professor Ilan Pappé spoke at IHRC's annual Genocide Memorial Day in London, UK on 21st January 2024, on the need to understand that the genocide of Palestinians we are currently witnessing, as brutal as it is, is also the demise of the so-called Jewish state. We need to be ready to imagine a new world beyond it.

The idea that Zionism is settler colonialism is not new. Palestinian scholars in the 1960s working in Beirut in the PLO Research Centre had already understood that what they were facing in Palestine was not a classical colonial project. They did not frame Israel as just a British colony or an American one, but regarded it as a phenomenon that existed in other parts of the world; defined as settler colonialism. It is interesting that for 20 to 30 years the notion of Zionism as settler colonialism disappeared from the political and academic discourse. It came back when scholars in other parts of the world, notably South Africa, Australia and North America agreed that Zionism is a similar phenomenon to the movement of Europeans who created the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. This idea helps us to understand much better the nature of the Zionist project in Palestine since the late 19th century until today, and it gives us an idea of what to expect in the future.

The settlers followed the most important logic adopted by settler colonial movements and that is that in order to create a successful settler colonial community outside of Europe you have to eliminate the natives in the country you have settled.

I think this particular idea in the 1990s, that connected so clearly the actions of European settlers especially in places such as North America and Australia, with the actions of the settlers who

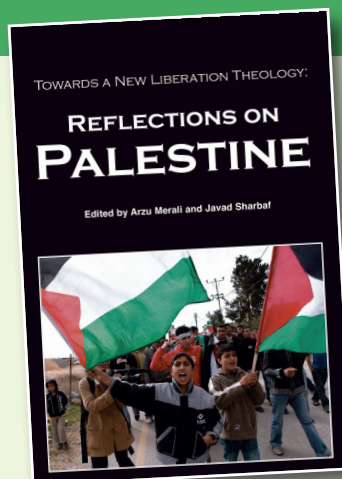
came to Palestine in the late 19th century elucidated clearly the intentions of the Jewish settlers who colonised Palestine and the nature of the local Palestinian resistance to that colonisation. The settlers followed the most important logic adopted by settler colonial movements and that is that in order to create a successful settler colonial community outside of Europe you have to eliminate the natives in the country you have settled. This means that the indigenous resistance to this logic was a struggle against elimination, and not just liberation. This is important when one thinks about the operation of the Hamas and other Palestinian resistance operations ever since 1948.

The settlers themselves as the case of many of the Europeans who came to North America, Central America or Australia, were refugees and victims of persecution. Some of them were less unfortunate and were just seeking better life and opportunities. But most of them

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were outcasts in Europe and were looking to create a Europe in another place, a new Europe, instead of the Europe that didn't want them. In most cases, they chose a place where someone else already lived, the indigenous people. And thus the most important core group among them was that of their leaders and ideologues who provided religious and cultural justifications for the colonisation of someone else's land. One can add to this, the need to rely on an Empire to begin the colonisation and maintain it, even if at the time the settlers rebelled against the empire that helped them and demanded and achieved independence, which in many cases they obtained and then renewed their alliance with empire. The Anglo-Zionist relationship that turned into an Anglo-Israeli alliance is a case in point.

The idea that you can remove by force the people of the land that you want, is probably more understandable - not justified - against the backdrop of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries - because it went together with full endorsement for imperialism and colonialism. It was fed by the common dehumanisation of the other non-Western, non-European people. If you dehumanise people you can more easily remove them. What was so unique about Zionism as a settler colonial movement is that it appeared on the international arena at a time where people all around the world had begun to have second thoughts about the rights of removing indigenous people, of eliminating the natives and therefore we can understand the effort and the energy invested by the Zionists and later the state of Israel in trying to cover up the real aim of a settler colonial movement such as Zionism, which was the elimination of the native.

But today in Gaza they are eliminating the native population in front of our eyes, so how come they have almost given up 75 years of attempting to hide their eliminatory policies? In order to understand that we have to appreciate the transformation in the nature of Zionism in Palestine over

the years.

At the early stages of the Zionist settler colonialist project, its leaders carried out their eliminatory policies with a genuine attempt to square the circle by claiming that it was possible to build a democracy and at the same time to eliminate the native population. There was a strong desire to belong to the community of civilised na-

there is a correlation between the way the ethnic cleansing in 1948 developed and in the operations of the Israelis in Gaza today. In 1948, the leadership justified to itself every massacre committed, including the infamous massacre of Deir Yassine on 9th April, as the reaction to a Palestinian action

tions and it was assumed by the leaders, in particular after the Holocaust, that the eliminatory policies will not exclude Israel from that association.

In order to square this circle, the leadership insisted that their eliminatory actions against the Palestinians were a 'retaliation' or 'response' against Palestinian actions. But very soon, when this leadership wanted to move into more substantial actions of elimination, they deserted the false pretext of 'retaliation' and just stopped justifying what they did.

In this respect, there is a correlation between the way the ethnic cleansing in 1948 developed and in the operations of

the Israelis in Gaza today. In 1948, the leadership justified to itself every massacre committed, including the infamous massacre of Deir Yassine on 9th April, as the reaction to a Palestinian action: it could have been throwing stones at the bus or attacking a Jewish settlement, but it had to be presented domestically and externally as something that doesn't come out of the blue, as self-defence. Indeed, that is why the Israeli army is called "Israeli Defence Forces". But because it is a settler colonial project it cannot rely all the time on 'retaliation'.

The Zionist forces began the ethnic cleansing during the Nakba in February 1948, for a month all these operations were presented as retaliation to the Palestinian opposition to the UN partition plan of November 1947. On 10th March 1948, the Zionist leadership ceased talking about retaliation and adopted a master plan for the ethnic cleansing of Palestine. From March 1948 to the end of 1948 the ethnic cleansing of Palestine that led to the expulsion of half of Palestine's population, the destruction of half of its villages and the de-Arabisation of most of its towns, was done as part of a systematic and intentional master plan of ethnic cleansing.

Similarly, after the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in June 1967, whenever Israel wanted to change fundamentally the reality or engage in a full scale ethnic cleansing operation, it dispensed with the need of justification.

We are witnessing a similar pattern today. At first the actions were presented as retaliation to operation Tufun al-Aqsa, but now it is the war named "sword of war" aiming to return Gaza under direct Israeli control, but ethnically cleansing its people through a campaign of genocide.

The big question is why politicians, journalists, and academics in the west fell into the same trap they had fallen into in 1948? How can they still today buy into this idea that Israel is defending itself in the Gaza Strip? That it is reacting to the

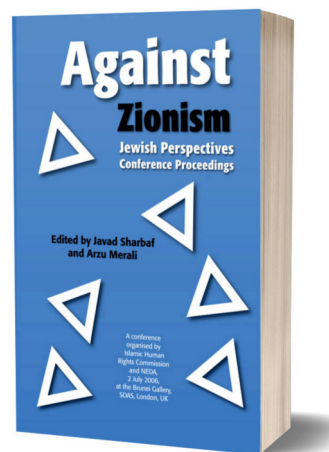
Against Zionism: Jewish Perspectives



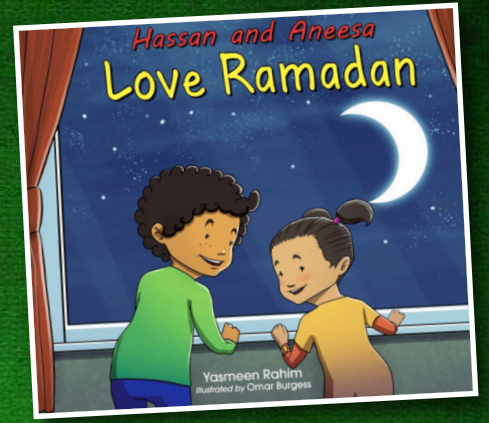
The papers in this collection come from brave intellectuals, academics, activists, and Rabbis. All of them continue to challenge the injustices and outright oppression caused by racist, supremacist discourses. Their work remains pertinent at a time when advocacy for justice, especially in support of the Palestinian people,

their rights and their aspirations, is being demonised.

This volume is essential reading for those struggling for the dignity and equality of all peoples in making the arguments and connections needed to transform all cultures of hate into ones of mutual respect for diversity, and dignity for all.

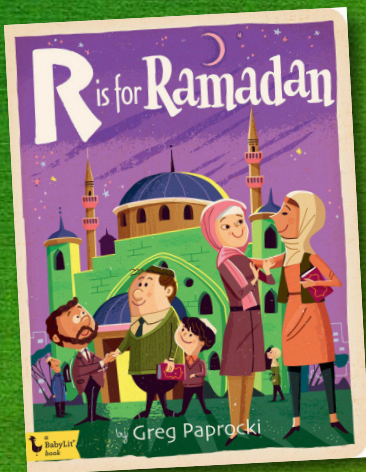


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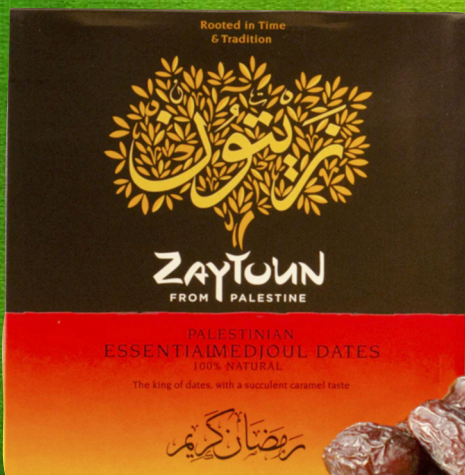
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actions of 7th October?

Or maybe they are not falling into the trap. They might know that what Israel is doing in Gaza is using 7th October as a pretext.

Either way, so far, the Israelis claim to a pretext every time they assault the Palestinians, has helped the state to sustain the immunity shield that allowed it to pursue its criminal policies without fear of any meaningful reaction from the international community. The pretext helped to accentuate the image of Israel as part of the democratic and western world, and hence beyond any condemnation and sanctions. This whole discourse of defence and retaliation is important for the immunity shield that Israel enjoys from governments in the Global North.

But as in 1948, today too, Israel as its operation lingers on, they dispense with the pretext, and this is when even their greatest supports find it difficult to endorse its policies. The magnitude of the destruction, the massive killings in Gaza, the genocide, are on such a level that Israelis find it more and more difficult to persuade even themselves that what they are doing is actually self-defence or reaction. Thus, it is possible that in the future more and more people would find it difficult to accept this Israeli explanation for the genocide in Gaza.

For most people it is clear that what is required is a context and not a pretext. Historically and ideologically, it is very clear that 7th October is used as a pretext to complete what the Zionist movement was unable to complete in 1948.

In 1948 the settler colonial movement of Zionism used a particular set of historical circumstances that I have written about in detail in my book *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, in order to expel half of Palestine's population. As mentioned, in the process they destroyed half of the Palestinian villages, demolished most of the Palestinian towns, and yet half of the Palestinians remained inside Palestine. The Palestinians who became refugees outside the boundaries of Palestine continued the resistance of the Palestinians and therefore the settler colonial ideal of eliminating the native was not fulfilled and incrementally Israel used all its power from 1948 to today to continue with the elimination of the native.

The elimination of the native from the beginning to the end includes not just a military operation, by which you would occupy a place, massacre people or expel them. Elimination needs to be justified or become an inertia and the way to do it is constant dehumanization of those you intend to eliminate. You cannot massively kill people or genocide another human being unless you dehumanise them. Thus, dehumanisation of the Palestinians is an explicit and an implicit message conveyed to the Israeli Jews through their educational system, their socialisation system in the army, the media and the political dis-

course. This message has to be conveyed and maintained if the elimination is to be completed.

So we are witnessing a particular cruel new attempt to complete the elimination. And yet, it is not all hopeless. In fact, ironically, this particular inhuman destruction of Gaza exposes the failure of the settler colonial project of Zionism. This may sound absurd, because I'm describing a conflict between a small resistance movement, the Palestinian liberation movement and a powerful state with a military machine and an ideological infrastructure that is focused solely on the destruction of the indigenous people of Palestine people. This liberation movement does not have a

Even the Nakba, which was an unimaginable catastrophe does not compare to what we are seeing now and what we are going to see in the next few months. We are in my mind in the first three months of a period of two years that will witness the worst kind of horrors that Israel can inflict on the Palestinians

strong alliance behind it, while the state it faces, enjoys a powerful alliance behind it - from the United States to multinational corporations, military industry security firms, mainstream media and mainstream academia - we're talking about something that almost sounds hopeless and depressing because you have this international immunity for the policies of elimination that begin from the early stages of Zionism until today. It will seem probably the worst chapter of the Israeli attempt to push forward eliminatory policies to a new kind of level into a much more concentrated effort of killing thousands of people in a short period of time as they have never dared to do before.

So how can it be also a moment of hope? First of all, this kind of a political entity, a state, that has to maintain the dehumanisation of the Palestinians in order to justify their elimination is a very shaky basis if we look into the more distant future.

This structural weakness was already apparent before 7th October and part of this weakness is the fact that if you take out the elimination project, there is a very little that unites the group of people who define themselves as the Jewish nation in Israel.

If you exclude the need to fight and eliminate the Palestinians, you are left with two warring Jewish camps, which we saw actually fighting on the streets of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem up to 6th October 2023. Huge demonstrations between secular Jews, those who describe themselves as secular Jews - mostly of European origin - believing that it's possible to create a democratic pluralistic state while maintaining the occupation and the apartheid towards the Palestinians inside Israel, were confronting a messianic new kind of Zionism that developed in the Jewish settlements in the West Bank, what I called elsewhere the state of Judea, which suddenly appeared in our midst, believing they now have a way of creating a kind of a Zionist theocracy with no consideration for democracy, and believing that this is the only vision for a future Jewish state.

There is nothing in common between these two visions apart from one thing: both camps don't care about the Palestinians, both camps believe that the survival of Israel depends on the continuation of the elimination policies towards the Palestinians. This is not going to hold water. This is going to disintegrate and implode from within because you cannot in the 21st century keep together a state and a society on the basis that their shared sense of belonging is being part of an eliminatory genocidal project. It can work for some definitely, but it cannot work for everyone.

We have seen already the indication for that before 7th October, how Israelis who have opportunities in other parts of the world due to their dual nationality, professions and their financial abilities, are thinking seriously of relocating both their money and themselves outside of the state of Israel. What you will be left with is a society that is economically weak, that is led by this kind of fusion of messianic Zionism with racism and eliminatory policies towards the Palestinians. Yes, the balance of power at first would be on the side of the elimination, not with the victims of the elimination, but the balance of power is not just local, the balance of power is regional and international, and the more oppressive the eliminatory policies are (and it's terrible to say but it's true) the less they are able to be covered up as a 'response' or 'retaliation' and the more they are seen as a brutal genocide policy. Thus, it is less likely that the immunity that Israel enjoys today would continue in the future.

So, I really think that at this very dark moment what we are experiencing - and it is a dark moment because the elimination of the Palestinians has moved to a new level, is unprecedented. In terms of the discourse employed by Israel, and the intensity and the purpose of the eliminatory policies - there wasn't such a period in history, this is a new phase of the brutality against the Palestinians. Even the Nakba, which was an unimaginable catastrophe does not compare to what we are seeing now and what we are going to see in the

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The end of Israel

next few months. We are in my mind in the first three months of a period of two years that will witness the worst kind of horrors that Israel can inflict on the Palestinians.

But even in this dark moment we should understand that settler colonial projects that disintegrate are always using the worst kind of means to try and save their project. This happened in South Africa and South Vietnam. I am not saying this as a wishful thinking, and I am not saying this as a political activist: I am saying this as a scholar of Israel and Palestine with all the confidence of my scholarly qualifications. On the basis of sober professional examination, I am stating that we are witnessing the end of the Zionist project, there's no doubt about it.

This historical project has come to an end and it is a violent end - such projects usually collapse violently and thus it is a very dangerous moment for the victims of this project, and the victims are always the Palestinians along with Jews, because

Jews are also victims of the Zionism. Thus, the process of collapse is not just a moment of hope it is also the dawn that will break after the darkness, and it is the light at the end of the tunnel.

Collapse like this however produces a void. The void appears suddenly; it is like a wall that is slowly eroded by cracks in it but then it collapses in one short moment. And one has to be ready for such collapses, for the disappearance of a state or a disintegration of a settler colonial project. We saw what happened in the Arab world, when the chaos of the void, was not filled by any constructive and alternative project; in such a case the chaos continues.

One thing is clear, whoever thinks about the alternative to the Zionist state should not look for Europe or the West for models that would replace the collapsing state. There are much better models which are local and are legacies from the recent and more distant pasts of the Mashraq (the eastern Mediterranean) and the Arab world as a whole. The long

Ottoman period has such models and legacies that can help us taking ideas from the past to look into the future.

These models can help us build a very different kind of society that respects collective identities as well as individual rights, and is built from scratch as a new kind of model that benefits from learning from the mistakes of decolonialisation in many parts of the world, including in the Arab world and Africa. This hopefully will create a different kind of political entity that would have a huge and positive impact on the Arab world as a whole.

Ilan Pappé

is Professor of History and Director for the European Centre for Palestine Studies at the University of Exeter. He is author of numerous books, the most recent being *The Biggest Prison on Earth: A History of the Israeli Occupation of Palestine* (Oneworld, 2015), *The Idea of Israel* (Verso, 2014) and *The Modern Middle East: A Social and Cultural History* (Routledge, 2014)

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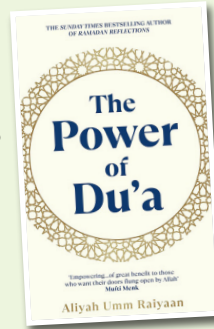
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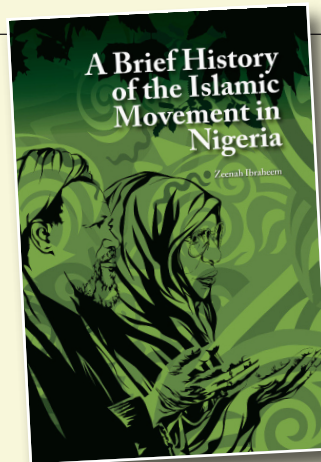


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